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# Burma News

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# BURMA NEWS

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## BURMA BAPTIST MISSIONARY FELLOWSHIP

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## *PERSONAL GLIMPSES.*

*Prepared by Harold Schock*

That which gives life and meaning to the Christian missionary enterprise are the people of the land. Very often significant people have names and faces which ordinarily would not be known beyond their own districts. In this issue of the BURMA NEWS we have tried to present some of these people from the heart's point of view. As you read these minute biographies, we pray that you will find, as we have, a noble challenge to a deeper Christian consecration of life.

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*Photos:* Cover, p. 6, 19, H. Schock; p. 21 R. Beaver; p. 28, 29, 30 Courtesy of "Gleanings", July, 1959.

## *COVER PICTURE*

The cover picture shows a Kachin Christian woman, Makaw Brang, from Nampaka, up near the China border. Raised in an Animist family, she turned to the Christian faith as a teenager, the result of studying in a Christian mission school.

Her marriage to a non-Christian brought a reversion of her religious beliefs, and her household was again the resident of Animist "nats". The little spirit shrine on the east wall of her home received a regular contribution of flowers, rice and fruits. But somehow her heart told her that all was not well.

A return to the Scriptures and a return to the Christian services of worship in the large thatch-roofed church on the Baptist Compound, effected a return of her faith in the risen Christ as the only means of happiness, peace and salvation. Having been in and out of these conflicting religious conceptions, she was now so thoroughly convinced that the way of the Christ was the only way, that she became responsible for permitting the Holy Spirit to convince her husband of this same truth.

Today as strong Christian lay people in the new Nampaka church, Makaw Brang and her husband are living witnesses to the transforming power and the true vitality of the Christian faith. Their son, Braung Gam, is upholding the Christian witness as an active Christian on the University of Rangoon campus where he is a sophomore.

# *A SERVANT OF THE SAWBWA BECOMES A SERVANT OF GOD*

*by Elaine T. Lewis*

IT was not surprising that the Sawbwa Gyi (ruling prince) of Kengtung singled out Aung Za to join his household and be the object of his special interest, for Aung Za was a bright boy with alertness of mind and a polite manner that made him outstanding in any group. Therefore, this young Kachin boy left his village while still very young and served in the household of the Sawbwa, while the Sawbwa saw that he had an opportunity for education. Living in this environment and attending the state school meant that Aung Za, although from a Christian home, had little real Christian influence in those days, but from time to time he visited his village home, and Christian men and women who were interested in him did what they could to nurture him in the Christian faith.

Yet, when members of the Royal household went to the pagodas to make their offerings, often Aung Za was to be found in the procession carrying some offering as he had been directed to do. When festival time came, he might at times be found with the other boys taking part in petty gambling games. The contacts he had with both Christian and non-Christian teachings were often most confusing to him. On one occasion for instance, when he wanted a new pair of shoes very badly, he decided to sell his flash-light and put the money he got from it into the lottery. Then he prayed that if God wanted him to get a new pair of shoes He would help him to win the lottery. It so happened that he did win, and the money he got was just enough to buy the shoes he wanted so badly. This incident led him to believe that God not only approved of gambling, but would even help a Christian to win. Later in life he was to become perplexed about this matter, and eventually came to understand the Christian attitude toward this and other social problems.

Aung Za became a favourite member of the Royal household. When the Sawbwa's younger brother went to Rangoon to become an airplane pilot, he took Aung Za along with him for a companion. Aung Za was given about everything he wanted, and in Rangoon was able to see and do many interesting things that were completely unknown to his Kachin relatives and friends in the villages. However, one time when he was visiting in Kengtung, he met some of his relatives and friends from the Kachin villages not far away.

They told him of how desperately they needed someone to come and teach them and lead them out of ignorance and poverty. Aung Za was deeply impressed with the needs of his people, but it was not easy to turn aside from the carefree life of luxury that he had found. Besides this, burdened though he was for his people, he felt that there was little he could do to help them. He had left school at an early age, and therefore would be ill-equipped to teach school. Moreover, if he went to a village to work he would be expected to be not only school teacher, but preacher as well. He realized how scant was his understanding of the Christian gospel. In fact, he himself hardly knew what it meant to be a Christian. However, to the best of his ability he prayed to God for guidance. Someone in counseling him suggested that he attend the Pangwai Bible School ond study for the Christian ministry. After that he would be prepared to go to his people and help them. After further prayer, Aung Za felt that this must be the right thing to do, so he went and talked to his employer about it. The young prince proved to be most understanding, and although he hated to lose the companionship of this very pleasant and bright young man, he said he would do nothing to keep him from helping his people.

Aung Za did attend the Pangwai Bible School. In many ways he was at a disadvantage with the other students, because he did not know Lahu well to begin with (the language used in teaching), and because he had been in Christian circles so little in his lifetime that he did not even know the most common Bible stories that others had learned in their childhood. However, Aung Za, nothing daunted, worked hard and did well. He always showed the finest spirit of cooperation, and he finished his studies with admirable distinction.

Today Sala Aung Za is living with his wife and children in a small Kachin village. Materially speaking, he is far poorer than when he was living in ease with the Sawbwa's family, but spiritually and emotionally he is richer and happier than he has ever been in his life. Because of him, Christian work among the Kachins in Kengtung State has received a new lease on life, and real progress is being made. In addition, he is reaching out with an evangelistic ministry to Lisus, Lahus, and Akhas living near him. The first Lisu convert to Christianity in Kengtung State was brought to Christ primarily through his ministry. It is hard to find any Christian leader that matches him with evangelistic fervor and love for Christ.

# A WOMAN PIONEER

*by L. P. Bonney*

SEVERAL years ago while I was still teaching English in the Sumprabum State School, there was a young girl in the class who seemed to be working very hard to absorb all the knowledge she could. She was in our girls' boarding department but was a rather quiet girl and I did not feel that I knew her very well. Her name was Bat Kaw Tawng.

Near the end of the school year she came to me and said she wanted to go to Bible School. At that time we had very few Bible women and since it was a new project in the area, we were trying to be very careful to choose only the best. There would be various obstacles to overcome for a woman in this kind of work. One very important aspect was that in this

**A Kachin Mother and baby of Northern Burma.**

backward hill area there was no such thing as a "single woman." Any girl reaching the early twenties who was not yet married would be looked on by the elders with great amazement and disfavor. I therefore talked about this with Bat Kaw Tawng and told her I did not think she was quite ready to go to Bible School. She needed more experience and a chance to prove she really had the stuff in her to become a pioneer.

About this time there was a call for a teacher to go way off near the China border to open a school for the Rawang people, a tribe of Kachins living mostly to the north of us. The request had come from a returned soldier who had become a Christian while in the army. After his military service he went back to his "country" and was eager for his own people to have a school and to become Christians. It was to be a State supported School but the people wanted a Christian teacher. The Headmaster of the School here in Sumprabum, decided that Bat Kaw Tawng would be a good one to tackle this job, so he asked her if she would be willing to go to this distant place. In the school they were to study in Jingpaw (Kachin) but the pupils did not know the Jinghpaw language and Bat Kaw Tawng didn't know Rawang. It was quite a proposition to put up to a young woman, but she accepted the challenge.

Soon letters began to come telling about what she was doing. She was the only Christian in the village, except for the returned soldier, and the people were really sincere in wanting to become Christians, so it was up to her to help them. She taught all day, and in the evenings she called the people together, instructing them from the Bible and of course teaching them to sing. At first she had to use an interpreter, but she soon picked up enough of the language to use it. Before many months several families wanted to "throw out the Nats" (give up their old Animist ways) and prepare for baptism, so Bat Kaw Tawng had to become preacher and do things that no other woman in the area had ever done. When there was a group ready for baptism they called the ordained pastor from several days' journey away, and at Christmas they had a big celebration and formed a new church. It is cold in those mountains in winter, with snow on the ground, and we had to scurry round and send wool for knitting a sweater and shoes to this young woman who had never seen snow before in her life.

After two years' teaching in the Rawang country, the Headmaster who had called her to the work, told her he thought she had better take a year off and go to the

Teachers' Training School, to better prepare for her work. But Bat Kaw Twang quickly sent back word that she did not wish to go for teacher's training, but still wanted to go to Bible School.

There was another girl ready to go to Bible School, so our Woman's Society arranged for both to study at the Burman Woman's Bible School at Insein. That meant they had to take all their work in the Burmese language. It was hard at first but they persevered and could soon use Burmese fluently. After graduating from the 3-year course, Bat Kaw Tawng was assigned to work in a village that had no pastor. Her teaching experience had given her courage to go around by herself and she visited all the neighbouring churches and was heartily welcomed by the Christians. Of course various relatives have continually tried to get her consent to marry someone of *their* choice, or even of *hers*, but she feels the time has not yet arrived for her to lay down her work.

After about two years in village work, the Hkahku Association Women's Society decided that they needed a travelling worker to go around and start new societies and to encourage and teach the ones already started. They decided that Bat Kaw Tawng would be an excellent person and they chose her for this work. She started this new assignment on January 1st, 1959 and her first appointment was to help teach in a Bible Conference in the Putao area. After the Conference she toured the whole area, going as far north as Nogmung, our Christian village near the borders of Tibet, and having learned the Rawang language which is used in the area, she was doubly welcomed by the women's societies.

As we were building a new girls' dormitory in Sumprabum, which is to be her headquarters, we were able to include a room for Bat Kaw Tawng and after her cold season travels, she came here just as school was opening, the first of June. When it is fairly good weather, she travels to nearby villages to encourage the Christians who have no resident pastor, and when she is in town, she goes up to the State School every morning and teaches Bible stories and songs to about one hundred small children.

It is too soon to see any great results from this new venture, but with her consecration to her Lord and her eagerness to help the women of this backward area, we feel sure that real growth in the Christian life will be evident in our women's societies all over the Association. Pray for this woman pioneer, that she may have many years of useful service in the Master's vineyard.

# A CHINESE ORPHAN

*by Harold Schock*

ORPHANS usually have a rough time. It was true for Peter Loo as much as for any. About the time the great depression rocked the world, Peter at 4 years of age was brought by an older brother to Burma from the borders of China. The mixed-up past began to take on a little shape as Peter got his education in a Roman Catholic school in Rangoon. But he was still a Buddhist. Then the war came—and he was running, shifting, but all the time learning. At least three dialects of Chinese plus good English and excellent Burmese were at his command by the time the war was over. A newspaper office seemed a logical place to use his talents rather thoroughly. The non-Communist press not only accepted him, but was pleased to have a man of his ability on the staff. His pay day brought an impressive $100 per month. This was doubled as he worked as censor and translator for Chinese films during spare hours.

During these post war days, the Bible was introduced to him by Protestant friends. This new key in religion brought a response in his soul, and he yielded to the gentle turn until his soul was unlocked and set free in the freedom of Christ. Stirred to enthusiastic heights by a visiting Chinese evangelist, Peter left the press and the film company, as Peter of another age left his nets, and followed Jesus all the way.

To Peter's mind, this meant the ministry. But this in turn meant training. Divinity school with one child—then two—put more rice on the table, but less meat. But he kept his goal ever before him. Immanuel Chinese Baptist Church in Rangoon became his place of worship and service as he led the

Chinese youth in fellowship and in deepening their spiritual knowledge.

Trained, capable, and popular, upon graduation Peter could take one of several jobs, An interdenominational and inter-racial job captured him first. Effective and happy, useful in Burmese and English as well as in Chinese, he nevertheless decided that being Chinese he must minister to his own needy people. This was not an easy decision to make, primarily because of the lack of Chinese Churches in Burma. Where would he work? Who would support him? There are hundreds of thousands of Chinese in Burma, with perhaps two or three thousand who claim to be Baptist. But there are only two Chinese churches with some semblance of organization. Most of the Christians belong to other national congregations.

Informal conversations often give birth to vital ideas. Encouragement, advice and cooperation will help those ideas to stay alive. So over a cup of tea, Peter, together with his Chinese friends still in Divinity School and other interested friends, gave birth to a five year plan for Christian work among the Chinese of Burma. They nurtured the plan until it gained recognition in the Burma Baptist Convention. This plan proposed to send forth trained Chinese workers among the Chinese communities of Burma. The object was not to establish a flock of new Chinese churches, but rather to train, encourage and strengthen the Chinese Christians already in the existing churches—Kachin, Shan, Burmese, or Karen—and to win the unreached for Christ.

Willingly, Peter became the first to go out under this plan. On $50 per month together with his family he moved to Lashio 500 miles north of Rangoon and became a missionary to the Chinese in the hills of upper Burma.

Last week while reflecting momentarily on his previous high salary, he drew himself quickly back to reality and true values as he said, "In the three months since I've been helping the Chinese Christians in Lashio, three men have come to me saying that by the grace of God, they have given up their opium smoking. That's worth more than any salary I could be paid." This reveals just a fraction of the good Peter is doing already, and the fine spirit in which he is doing his work for Christ.

The Chinese of upper Burma have long felt rather as orphans. Orphans usually have a rough time. So we thank God that an orphan of orphans, Peter Loo, has gone with his consecration to these people to love them and to serve them in the name of Jesus Christ, as their "pastor".

# THE BIBLE BRINGS A NEW LIFE

*by Charity C. Carman*

NOT long ago Thra and Thramu (Rev. and Mrs.) Peter Hla were up in Monywa for Christian Home teaching. They met a very zealous, interesting young Burman Christian.

In 1953 as a soldier in the Burmese Army, he went up from Toungoo to help re-occupy the big Karen mountain village of Kler Lah. During the reoccupation of this village, he found both a Burmese and an English Bible in a village nearby. In his leisure hours, he read both the Bibles. From that time on he kept seeking information from the Christian Karens around as to the meaning of what he was reading. He found many of the Bible teachings practised by these new Christian friends. (Thramu Rebecca and Thra Ta Paw are the leaders there.)

Later he was transferred to Insein. At once he sought someone who could tell him more about what he was reading. Fortunately he found out from Saw Benson and others in Insein, the answers to many more of his questions. He was helped by the Burmese pastor to know what it means to become a Christian and join a Baptist Church. Soon he was baptized and joined the Ywama Burmese Baptist Church of Insein.

As he left the Army about 1957, his uncle, a rich man in Monywa, invited him to come and stay with him since he is an orphan. But he soon found his uncle's house not too pleasant a place to stay. The uncle kept asking him to give up his belief in Christ, saying that then he would give him a share of his wealth. Maung Kyaw Thaung steadily refused to give up his belief or to take more money than he actually needed.

Finally he moved to the English Methodist compound, where the missionary allowed him to live in one room. There he is helping in the Church and is a regular, interested member. Soon he will go to Mandalay to take training from the Christian doctors at the Leper Home.

So the story of how Mg Kyaw Thaung will have to be a continued one. Surely you will pray with me that he will continue to receive direction from Jesus, the Light of Life.

# *SERVING THE LORD THROUGH THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL*

*by M. E. Hunt*

THE Private Schools Teachers' Refresher Course met in Maymyo in April 1959. When the chairman was thanking those who had helped to make it a success, he said, "The next one on our list is one of the most beautiful women I have ever met—, Sayamagyi (great lady teacher) Daw Htwa Yi." In saying this he was not only giving a personal opinion, but was also expressing the feelings of her many friends who know the beauty of her spirit.

This spirit is shown in the setting up of a program in Colgate Memorial School so that pupils who cannot pay fees can work their way through high school. It is also shown in many personal contacts with pupils, teachers and others.

One Matric (final year of high school) pupil, not knowing the regulations concerning the Seventh Standard Certificate, changed the date of his birth as listed on the Certificate, thus invalidating it. Neither time nor expense was spared in conferences, letters, and telegrams, to gain him permission to take these important government exams. Permission was finally granted shortly before the exams, and he was one of the 4% in the whole of Burma who passed, thus becoming eligible for College entrance.

One girl came into the boarding department during the school year because her parents were leaving Maymyo, but they had no money for her fees. The girl soon became ill—the doctor said her sickness was malnutrition. Extra food and care were given to build her up, involving extra expense for a non-paying student. During the hot season, although her parents were back in Maymyo, the girl chose to stay in the boarding school rather than return to her home. Thus Sayamagyi's spirit of Christian concern for an ordinary student had already begun to bear fruit.

A class is taught at Colgate for pupils who cannot fit into the regular school program. An orphan girl, who had had almost no schooling and was too old for First Standard, was brought to Sayamagyi. The girl had been living with a distant relative who did not want her, and was not kind to her. She was given work in the school and placed in the "Special Class." She has done very well in both.

Not all cases turn out so well. When pupils do not measure up, they are usually given second, third, and more chances. We all know the heartache when those with whom we work do not measure up to our expectations. Daw Htwa Yi's expectations are high,

so the heartaches come often. And prayers follow those who need them most.

Her rich spirit is also shown in the program set up for out-of-school activities for the boarders on Saturday and Sunday morning devotions in dormitory, daily chapel, daily Bible classes, weekly faculty prayer meetings, etc.

This spirit is shown in the fact that all racial groups find a welcome at Colgate. No difference is made because of race either on the staff or among the pupils. There were at least ten different ethnic groups in Colgate last year.

Her influence is also felt outside the school. She has been president of the Y.W.C.A. for several years; and although at each of the last two elections she has tried to resign, she has been persuaded to carry on for at least one more year. She is one of the leaders who made the Youth Camp here in Maymyo successful, being responsible for the excellent meals as well as helping plan for the classes and general work of the camp.

Many more things could be told but this is enough to show why an American friend, who knew none of this, and had met Daw Htwa Yi only at the Refresher course would say: "She is one of the most beautiful women I have ever met."

## BURMA BAPTISTS SEND MISSIONARIES TO THAILAND

Baptists in Burma have responded to the Macedonian Call from Thailand by sending missionaries there. Thra Sein Pe, after a vacation in Burma, has returned to Thailand for his second term, and Thra Lwai Say has started his first term there, both working in the Ma O Gla Leadership Training Center. The Burma Convention hopes to send a group of Karens to Thailand in October this year to participate in the Karen Baptist Convention of Thailand Annual Meeting and Institute at Maesariang. Official delegates will be Thra Htwe Maung Gye, Mrs. Louise Paw, and Sra S'Aye; other delegates will be Mrs. Shwe Sein, President of the Women's Federation, her niece who is a nurse, and U Zan and his wife, Daw Thein Khin.

Sra Po Sin has returned to Burma after completing a year's term surveying the Pwo Karen Christian areas in Thailand. His report is very encouraging and challenging. Thra Tun Shein, General Secretary of the Burma Baptist Convention, has just returned after a month's tour of studying the Pwo and Sgaw Karen work.

# TRIBUTE TO A LITTLE MAN WITH A BIG VOICE

*by Milt Combs*

EASTER Sunday was going to be an unsual day for Rev. Samo Nyi Lay of Thayetmyo. As pastor of the Asho Chin Baptist Church, it meant that a lot of time and energy would go into preparations. There was the sermon and special worship service to prepare, choir rehearsals, and many other things to do.

At last, Easter Sunday came, and the worship service and other programs at the church were carried out far better than Samo Nyi Lay had ever anticipated. The choir and congregation sang beautifully, and Samo Nyi Lay delivered one of his best sermons.

That evening, as on every Sunday evening, Samo Nyi Lay was looking forward to teaching his special adult Sunday School Class. Picking up his Bible, he said goodbye to his wife and started off. While walking along the dusty dirt road he had one of his periodic coughing spells. But since he had had them before he didn't pay too much attention to this one and continued on his way.

Finally, he arrived at the home where he was to teach his class. As he approached the little thatched roof house, he felt quite tired but knew that it was his duty to go ahead and do the best that he

could. He greeted everyone, and after leading them in prayer, he asked them to open their Bibles and turn to Matt. 6:9—the Lord's Prayer. He gave several interpretations and was asked a few questions about the text. Then, suddenly he began to cough again. This time it was a deep raspy cough, and the expression on his face let everyone know that he was in great pain. Unable to control the coughing he lost his breath and fell to the floor unconscious. At first everyone thought that he had only lost his breath but after seeing a trickle of blood flow from between his lips, they knew something very serious had happened. In a few moments Samo Nyi Lay's heart stopped beating, and everyone there sat in quiet reverence.

About fifty years ago Samo Nyi Lay was born in a little village called Patlegyi located in Magwe District which is in central Burma. His father was a farmer and a very devout Buddhist who didn't think very highly of Christians or any other non-Buddhist religious group. When Samo Nyi Lay, finished four years of schooling

his parents persuaded him to become a flute player and drummer with a Buddhist drama group. He worked with this troupe several years, and eventually, because of his acting ability, he was given the chance to play the part of a clown. He was a great success at this, and wherever he went he always found a responsive audience. This experience gave him a great deal of self-confidence, and always having to shout in order to be heard, helped him to develop a heavy bass voice. Quite often people would remark, "How can such a big voice come from such a little man?"

After working as a clown for about ten years, Samo Nyi Lay heard about the ABM Agricultural School in Pyinmana. He liked drama, but felt that the pace was just a bit too strenuous for him. So he decided to join the Agricultural School. He went to Pyinmana and was accepted. The years seemed to go very fast for him and soon he graduated as one of the best students in his class.

The spiritual seeds which were sown at Pyinmana found a fertile soil in Samo Nyi Lay, because in just a few years after his graduation, he made the important decision to accept Christ as the Lord and Saviour of his life. In a short time he was baptized by Dr. E. C. Condict, ABM Missionary stationed at Thayetmyo. Since he also felt that he had a call to preach, an opportunity was provided for him to attend the Burmese Theological School at Insein. Following his graduation he was called to be pastor of the Asho Chin Baptist Church in Thayetmyo. The church ordained him and he began his ministry.

As a pastor, Samo Nyi Lay achieved many things, some small and some big. One of his biggest achievements was to start the Asho Chin Bible School at Thayetmyo. The groundwork and plans were laid by Dr. Condict and others, but it was Samo Nyi Lay who saw that they were actually carried out. Today, there are over thirty students and four full-time teachers at the Bible School. Its graduates are serving in many different parts of Burma as pastors, evangelists, and Bible women. Quite often they are in a better position to evangelize the larger Buddhist community than any other ethnic group in Burma.

In spite of being only four feet and eleven inches tall, Samo Nyi Lay can be rightly thought of as a spiritual giant of this country. He was a very energetic and willing worker. He always seemed to have time to say an encouraging word which made him a true friend and pastor for many. His sermons were always helpful and to the point. And whenever there was misunderstanding, whether in or out of the church, he was a very tactful peace-maker.

May all the world hear about Samo Nyi Lay and pay tribute to this little man with a big voice—the voice of God.

# "DRY BONES" OF BASSEIN LIVE AGAIN!

*by Lloyd James*

THE sound of hammers driving home nails and saws cutting wood to length on the Karen Compounds in the Delta town of Bassein these days seems to speak of the faithfulness of God and the answer to prayers and hopes of the Karens as well as Christians in all of Burma. The freeing of these long occupied compounds for Christian use again is in no small way similar to the restoration of Israel which Ezekiel expected in his vision of the valley of dry bones which came to life, for Mission and Karens had both wondered whether a Christian program would ever again be carried on in their "valley of dry bones", In Bassein.

The Bassein Karen mission is one of the most successful and well-known of our American Baptist mission stations. Indeed it was once judged the model mission of the world by an inter-denominational missionary survey team. The schools there produced some of Burma's outstanding leaders in both civic and church life. The Sgaw Karens in 1920 had built a modern school building there costing over $200,000. It even possessed a pipe-organ that was unique in South-East Asia.

This building survived the ravages of World War II with only minor damages. However, in 1949 the civil war broke out in Burma and Bassein found itself in the midst of the fiercest fighting. The Karens fled from the town, and after their departure their property was looted and destroyed. The large building was carried away brick by brick until not one brick was left standing on another, and anyone who had known the compound previously would not be able to identify it later except for one large tree left standing. As another aftermath both this compound and the large Pwo Karen compound downtown were completely occupied by squatters who were unsympathetic if not hostile towards the Karens. This was further complicated by the fact that in newly independent Burma it was almost impossible for the owner of land to regain possession of his land from squatters.

In the face of such a situation it seemed hopeless to expect that the once great Karen program in Bassein would be re-opened. The Karens opened sections of their schools in villages around the Bassein district. Then suddenly and unexpectedly a new hope came. The new military government of Burma began a campaign to clean up the cities of Burma, and one of their first targets was the filth infested squatter areas on

large compounds in all cities of Burma, moving the inhabitants to previously prepared areas outside the city limits. Our two compounds in Bassein were included in those to be cleared. Hurriedly Karen elders met and laid plans to take advantage of this sudden answer to their prayers. They found the task before them very difficult, for government required definite plans for the full use of the returned compounds, including building plans which must show permanent type buildings and not the temporary type buildings which they had plannnd to use at first in re-opening their High School and Bible Training School. Another problem facing the elders was the fact that their constituency was being very hard pressed because of Army requirements that their villages be moved to river banks as security measures. Having to move away from their gardens and fields meant a real economic hardship.

In spite of these difficulties the Karens went to work and started making collections and before long had raised about $15,000 for the reconstruction. Our Mission Boards are helping with a loan of $20,000. Other friends are helping as much as they can. Plans call for the expenditure of around K 1,500,000 or $300,000 for a program of reconstruction that is expected to be spread out over six years. Each year's work is being carefully planned, and no one doubts that the Karens can complete the task they have laid out for themselves, for they have shown in the past that they can accomplish what they set out to do.

The Pwo Karens are also faced with a difficult job in their reconstruction in their downtown plot, for although they have not had the complete destruction suffered by the Sgaw Karens, they are a much smaller group, and will also be hard pressed to use their large compound to the fullest. They also are giving sacrificially and the Mission Boards and friends are helping as well.

As the mission treasurer I expect to have the pleasure shortly to carry out the transfer of the Sgaw Karen plot to the local group, the approval having been given by the Boards only recently. I am told that when I arrive I shall see the dry bones taking life again in the form of 11 buildings now completing construction on the Sgaw Karen Compound and that I shall find the High School and Bible Training school in operation. On the Pwo Karen compound I shall find 4 buildings under repair with the Pwo Karens again worshiping in their beautiful chapel and their own missionaries, Rev. and Mrs. E. T. Fletcher, again living in the mission residence on the compound. This is truly something for which to praise the God of Abraham, Isaac, Ezekiel, and the Karens of Burma!

# DEDICATION OF THE NEW CHURCH AT MYITKYINA

*by H. G. Tegenfeldt*

AFTER more than four years since we had broken ground and begun building operations, it was our great joy to dedicate the finished Geis Memorial Church building in Myitkyina, April 12th and 13th, 1959. Rev. and Mrs. George J. Geis were the first missionaries in the Myitkyina District, arriving here in 1893, so it seemed quite fitting to the Christians here to remember them in this way. The church is built of river stone, collected from the Irrawaddy River which flows nearby, and will seat nearly 1,000 people when filled to capacity.

The main dedication service began Sunday morning, April 12th, when the large crowd which had assembled at the football field began marching slowly, four abreast, up the main road which leads past the church. The procession was led by Rev. Walter D. Sutton, senior Baptist missionary in Burma, who carried the new pulpit Bible. Music was provided by a Kachin bagpipe band playing "Onward Christian Soldiers". The procession marched once around the new church, and then paused, packed tightly on every side of the building, for the ceremony opening the main doors. In that ceremony, the two oldest Kachin pastors (each of whom has been in Christian service for 57 years), and our missionary Field Secretary took part. Following the opening of the doors, only a small part of those present were able to squeeze into the church, the remainder having to be content to sit in the mandats erected on three sides of the church. During the service, the great joy and solemnity of the occasion was emphasized in the liturgy and prayer of dedication, the dedicatory sermon, and the music provided by several choris. More than 5,000 were present for this big service.

In the afternoon, the report of the building committee was presented, and greetings brought from the other associations and Christian bodies. Preceding the evening sermon, the ordination of the pastor of this church, Rev. Eddie Ginn and also of the chaplain of the 4th Kachin Rifles, brought added joy and blessing to

the service. On Monday, in addition to challenging messages in the morning, plus the reading of greetings from former missionaries now in America, a tea party was given in the afternoon for government officers and elders of various communities in Myitkyina Town. That evening, using fine stage equipment borrowed from the army, an outdoor pageant was presented, depicting scenes from the missionary experiences of the Geises. A tremendous crowd gave very fine attention to this conclusion of the two days of dedication services.

Just as many thousands of hours of volunteer labour had gone into the construction of the church, much time, energy and thought went into the planning and preparations for this big occasion. Government officers gave their help, especially in hauling water and providing the compound with electricity. (The town generator literally had blown up about three weeks before, so special generators were brought in, to light our compound only). In groups of 50 or more, villagers took their turns in preparing vegetables, cooking, wrapping the rice in leaves, etc., for the 3,600 guests who were served (cafeteria style) during those 2½ days.

Some of us were a bit concerned about the finances for this tremendous undertaking, especially because after originally planning for just a one-day dedication, it was later voted to extend it to two days. However, our fears were unfounded. Such tremendous amounts of vegetables, rice, and money were brought in that although cash expenditures for everything came to about K 17,000, (about 3,400 dollars) more than K 3,000 remained when materials were sold off and accounts cleared.

Since the dedication was held during the Buddhist water festival (see July-August Burma News page 6) the committee was concerned about people going to and from the services getting drenched on the way. A request was made to the Buddhist leaders to kindly ask children and others not to throw water on those wearing the red and white registration badge. As a result, pedestrians (and jeeps, too) displaying the badge were not troubled at all; but woe betide him who forgot his badge! For this very thoughtful spirit shown by Buddhists here in Myitkyina, we were most grateful.

Although many who would have liked to come for the dedication were unable to do so, nevertheless every area of Kachin work was represented, and almost all of the older leaders were present. It was an inspiring occasion, and we trust the enthusiasm and joy experienced may continue to show itself in devoted service to the Lord throughout our area in the days ahead.

# A CHRISTIAN CENTER STARTED

*by Eileen James*

A NEW type of work to Burma, the Christian Center, has been started recently by the Burma Baptist Convention through the leadership of Rev. and Mrs. Harold Schock, former missionaries of the ABHMS in Christian center work for the American Indians in USA.

The Schocks began a center program in the Thamada neighborhood in Rangoon last year. But only after a year's work, notice came that all the people there must move to the new suburb, called Okkalapa, twelve miles away. There the government was moving thousands of people from the congested areas of Rangoon. Harold was justifiably discouraged when he learned that the Thamada area was to be evacuated. All of his work for an entire year seemed to be wiped out along with the buildings! As all the houses in Thamada community were torn down and the people left with their belongings to build houses in the treeless, grassless, stretches of Okkalapa. Harold Schock's heart went with them.

He went to the new area and found the people here and there settled in new houses amidst many houses of strangers.

One day I, with others, went along to visit Okkalapa. I wish I could just take you along with me for a visit there rather than try to write about it because you could then experience with me the overflowing joy which I felt there when I saw what Christian love and friendliness meant to the hearts of people.

As Okkalapa is a new development, the roads are still temporary, Consequently, we parked the car on one of the main gravel streets and we walked down the wet, sloppy road toward one of the houses where the center program is carried on.

Some of the houses are small two or three room wooden structures. A very few are two story wooden buildings. Many houses are two or three room bamboo and thatch houses. Each householder is building what he can afford. A bamboo house costs from 50 to 250 dollars. A wooden house costs about 600 dollars. Each house is off the ground at least four feet to be above the water which surrounds it on a very rainy day during the monsoon season As we walked down the road we could see the attempts to make home out of a barren spot. There were some bright curtains at the windows and doors. In the small 40 foot yards were treasured pots of ferns and crotons brought along with the furniture from their former homes. I felt like a stranger in a new land—and so do the people of Okkalapa.

But imagine my joy and surprise to see someone run to the door and wave vigorously to us! Then others came. Children ran from behind the house, their faces radiant as they called out affectionately, "Hey, Bogyi!" Women on the doorsteps smiled and motioned for us to stop in and visit awhile. An old man in a pink turban waved to us. Harold explained that he is not a Christian but had lived in Thamada Community and knew what they were doing there for the young people. He was the first person in Okkalapa to greet Harold with a warm welcome. These folks who were greeting us so happily were former Thamada people who were rejoicing to see their Christian friend return.

We approached a house where a Chinese man came out across the little one plank bridge to invite us in for a visit. Harold said to us, "We haven't time, but do you mind? They'll appreciate a visit." And they surely did. The wife appeared with sweet coffee and cookies. The man is not a Christian but he thinks there are many good things about Christianity, and he wants his children to go to the Center. The wife speaks only a little Burmese and is very lonesome among all the new Burmese speaking neighbours. I enjoyed watching her happy face as she talked avidly with Estelle Schock, who converses fluently in Chinese. This woman knows very little if anything about the Christian faith, but she has felt love and warmth in two Christian friends who were willing to stop and take time to receive her hospitality and need for friendship.

When we arrived at the home where a Christian teacher, U Shwe Thwin, is willing to have Center activities in his small house, six or eight shy but smiling children appeared at the front door. Everytime the children see Harold walk down the streets, they come to the Center house, hoping to hear a story, a song, or play some games. Again Harold turned to us, "Do you mind taking a little more time? I don't like to disappoint them." This giving, friendly spirit is filling a need for love and security among old and young in the barren, strange city of Okkalapa.

It is no wonder then that non-Christian strangers whom Rev. Schock has never met will go out of their way unsolicited to protect his old station wagon from passers by as he leaves it on a main street. They have seen his friendly smile, and they have seen and heard the happy children who enjoy the worthwhile times at the Center.

We all piled into the car to return to Rangoon. But Harold said, "Wait! I brought along some tree seeds and banana sprouts from our yard to give away." As

he passed out a handful of jackfruit tree seeds, a Burmese woman sitting next to me thought it was candy he was giving the children! Indeed the gleeful way in which they received the seeds would make one think so! It will take a long time for Okkalapa to have trees and shrubs but bit by bit, day by day this Christian witness of love will have some growing green monuments.

The Christian Center at Okkalapa is a new project of the Burma Baptist Convention. Many people are helping, missionaries and nationals together. The project needs prayer, wisdom, work, and support of Christian friends both in Burma and elsewhere.

But, as I recall the genuine interest and friendliness I saw there, I know the seeds for the Center planted in Thamada community are growing in Okkalapa. Through the Christian witness in the new Christian Center, many lives will be lifted from discouragement and loneliness. Many children will find wholesome and happy activities which will guide them to good citizenship. And some will find real joy as they receive Christ as Lord and Saviour.

# THE PROMISED LAND

*by Harold Schock*

FRIDAY night they decided they would stay*. They had no reason to move. It was good that the bamboo shacks which had sprung up all over the city of postwar Rangoon should be cleared away and the people moved to Okkalapa. But the people on Fytch Road had quite nice houses now—even if they were squatters. "We'll stay or fight."

Saturday morning two men came in an army truck with a table and some sheets of paper. They set up their little office on the dirt floor of the school house and began quietly to register the Fytch Road community for free land in Okkalapa. Each family was entitled to one plot 40 x 60 feet. Protest quickly gave way to the sound of hammers, and within a month they had all joined the other squatters of Rangoon to help make a total of 100,00 who had turned nearby paddy fields into the city of Okkalapa.

Religious groups quickly applied for sites in the new city. However, only the Buddhist Monks so far have been given land on which to build. The others have received promises of land grants which they will no doubt get before the end of this year. This "Promised Land" grant is intended for various purposes.

The Rangoon City Mission Society has asked for land, but they are not waiting to begin their work. Even now workers are helping to round up the scattered Christians and are having worship services in areas where several Christian families can get together. The Bible schools in the Rangoon —Insein area are sending workers to hold Sunday Schools and preaching services in Christian homes in Okkalapa.

The Burma Baptist Convention has applied for land on which to build a rather extensive Christian Center program. Here also work has not waited for "the promised land." The Fytch Road community was moved to the Gahjee section of Okkalapa, and they were quick in pleading for the kind of Christian Center program which they had known at Fytch Road before the mass exodus from the city. Although very few Christians live in this area, one home was offered immediately as a temporary shelter for Christian Center activities. So at present a total of 12 constructive hours is spread over four days each week. Typing, scouting, and craft classes attract the teen agers. Games, song and story times, plus a thriving Sunday School bring as many as fifty children into the 18 foot square borrowed front room. A second small beginning has been made in another section of Okka-

Okkalapa children greet Mrs. Ray Beaver every week as she arrives to teach a crafts class.

lapa where a youth choir and a children's song and story time take much of Saturday afternoon.

The Relief Committee of the Burma Christian Council has begun a part time clinic to help minister to the thousands in Okkalapa who need but cannot afford medical attention. Hundreds of pounds of UNICEF milk powder have been given out already. Saturday afternoon when two Christian nurses visited Okkalapa unanounced but ready for work, they went to a small, poor home where a Buddhist friend lived. Immediately the sick began to come as though drawn by a strange power. They sat on the floor waiting their turn to tell their ailments to the skilled nurses. When they left the little shack, they carried with them a little medicine in the hand, a little practicle advice in the head, and a little warmth in the heart still glowing from the painless injection of Christian love. More than 100 patients come on a Saturday. There missionary Bertha Dickason and her colleagues administer service all day. Even when dusk descends they treat the last patient with the aid of a flashlight, not wanting to turn any away without first giving them care.

This small beginning of Christian medical relief work is also crying for "the promised land" so that its works can be multiplied. But meanwhile Christian concern must find its outlet, and it has done so again on a borrowed bamboo floor under a thatch roof.

*See (Burma News No. 2, 1959 page 25.)

# NEW ZOMI CHIN BIBLE SCHOOL

*by Edward K. Bill, Acting Principal*

"CHRISTIANITY is the key word of civilization in the Chin Hills" is a true statement when one is looking back over the great service of the American Baptist Foreign Mission in our area. Darkness has turned into dawn, and the dawn into light. And Christ's Great Kingdom is truly coming upon the Chin People. It was about sixty years ago in 1899 when the late Rev. Carson came to the Chin Hills as the first missionary. He was followed by the Karen missionaries who helped their white brother's evangelization in serving as preacher, evangelist, and school teacher as well. The first Chin Christians were baptized in 1904 by Thra Shwe Zan, a Karen preacher.

Since then Christianity has been growing. Every year since World War II the report has shown an increase of more than a thousand members. When God saw that the harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few, the new Zomi Baptist Bible School was opened on the 1st June, 1959 at Falam, about a mile from Falam town under the beautiful pine trees. It is situated high on a hill just above the new motor road. The school was organized so that trained leaders may be available within ten years to accomplish the task of pastors and to carry proper church organization in the Chin Hills.

However, this new Bible School became possible only when the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society sent Kyats thirty-five thousand. And now our grateful thanks is to God, but our inexpressible thanks is to the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society. Thirdly, our thanks goes to the Rev. Robert G. Johnson, missionary to Haka Chin Hills, now on furlough, who took the major responsibility, and finally to those Chin Christians who contributed their time and energy.

At present there are 32 students from every corner of the Chin Hills, even from Tamu and Homalin areas. All subjects are taught in English except Burmese language. Our primary subjects are Pastoral Theology, Pastoral Counselling, Life of Christ, Parables of Jesus, Church History, Evangelism, Youth Work in the Church, Baptist History, and General Missions. English and Burmese subjects are also included. Mr. David Van Bik, who has been studying at Berkeley Divinity School in U.S.A., is to be the principal. Prior to his arrival only one teacher and Rev. Mang Khaw Pau, the Convention Secretary, were teaching regularly. It was Dr. Judson who said, "The Future is as bright as the promises of God". This is true for us. Dear readers, please remember us in your prayer always!

"Seeing the wondrous works of God at first hand"

# *ON A TRIP TO NORTH BURMA*

*by Thra Tun Shein, Gen'l Sec'y of Burma Baptist Convention*

THIS was a month long trip that took us to a point some twenty miles from the Burma-Assam border on the famous Ledo Road, and later to the northern most station of our Burma Mission, Sumprabum, from where we could see the snow capped mountains. My travelling companions on this trip were the Reverend Walter D. Sutton, Sr. of Tavoy, one of our most senior missionaries, and Mr. Roy Taylor, a retired engineer and a senior deacon of the Immanuel Baptist Church of Rangoon.

Our main interest on this trip was to see the work among the Nagas along the border. I, myself, have been thinking and planning this trip for some years since work began there. I am much interested in this work because I was over in that area during the war and I had worked with the Nagas there. So, this was the fulfilment of my dream.

## NAGAS

From Myitkyina when Rev. H. G. Tegenfeldt made arrangements for us, we went to Tingkawk, a Kachin settlement where the Kachin Christians had moved down from the hills in the Shan State in the Kutkai area, where cultivation was getting to be a very serious problem. Down here in this fertile valley where five rivers meet, with plenty of room for wet paddy cultivation, these people moved down with the hope of making a good living. There were already more than two hundred households at Tingkawk and at the time we were there, forty families had just moved in. This migration has gone on every hot season for the past 3—4 years. Tingkawk is about 100 miles from Myitkyina and the Kachin State government has been working on this road to make it an all weather road. These settlers are scattered along this road beginning from the 60th mile or thereabouts. However, Tingkawk is the main centre because the pioneer, Howa Duwa, lives there. This man had his eyes wide open when he was travelling along this road after the War, trading between Burma and Assam. He saw this valley with all its prospects and he and his family were the first to move into this valley. He has a son who is mechanically minded and who has been a great help to his father. There is already a pastor at Tingkawk, who came over with the Duwa and the church and the school are growing rapidly. It is possible that within the next few years, a Hukawng Valley Kachin Baptist Association

**Sara Zau Tu with Kachin evangelist to the Nagas**

will be organized.

We stayed over one day at Tingkawk and drove to Shingbwiyang. Shingbwiyaung is situated at the foot of the Naga Hills and is the main station or the jumping off place for this Naga work.

Shingbwiyang was the very first station opened for this Naga work and now within the short time of 4-5 years, we now have a well-established Primary School with four teachers and a Pastor who is also the head of the school. The Pastor's wife is a qualified nurse. Most of the 70-80 school children are Nagas and they look quite different from the Naga children I used to see during the war. A large plot of land has been secured by the Kachin Convention and more permanent buildings are being constructed with the financial help from the Foreign Mission Boards. Boys and girls are housed in the school domitories, because they come from outside of Shingbwiyaung. There is one young married couple in this school, both are attending classes. He is a bright prospect for the future. Both of them have been baptized and he is already a leader in the school and the community.

At Namyung there is also a Primary School which was started by the Kachin Convention but has since become a State School with the original Christian staff. Here too, things are different from what they used to be. The people as well as their houses have changed for the better. At Namlip, a small village, a small school had been opened by the Kachin

preacher, helped by his daughter. It was wonderful to hear the school children sing in six different languages—Naga, Kachin, Burmese, English, Chinese and Lisu. On that Sunday, there were 3 baptisms at Namlip and when we got to Namyung on our way back to Shingbwiyang, we were told that 50 persons had been baptized that morning.

This trip to the Naga Hills was very stimulating, inspiring, and encouraging. We re-discover that God is still working through us, the unstable human beings, for the advancement of His kingdom. I, myself, have found out that miracles are still happening in our present, modern, and scientific age. We remember that Jesus drove out the evil spirit from a boy who was persecuted by this evil spirit since he was a child and the Lord made him whole and normal. That act was considered a miracle and it was. Now, these Nagas who worshipped and were under the spell of these spirits, were living a sub-human life. They were afraid all the time that they might anger the spirits. They sacrificed live stock to these spirits for any little thing even though they could raise very little produce and crops. Thus, they had nothing much they could call their own except their own miserable lives. These same people have now found Jesus Christ, the Redeemer, and the saving grace of the Lord Jesus has changed their whole life. They have become new creatures and the old fears are gone, the old miserable feeling has disappeared; and life now has a meaning for them. They are really and actually singing praises to God. What miracles!

Nagas listening to Kachin evangelist

## SUMPRABUM

Our purpose in going to Sumprabum is a little different. We went there to participate in the jubilee celebration of the Hkahku Association, the 25th anniversary of the beginning of Baptist work in this northern section of Burma. We had hoped to drive through to Sumprabum, but we had to stop for the night at one camp. The road was bad due to the rain that fell a few days before and at a few points we had to get down and push. It was quite a sight to see Mr. Sutton, with his trousers rolled up, pushing hard at the stuck car. It was also a new experience for Mr. Taylor, who had spent most of his life in Rangoon. All the same, we made it to Sumprabum in time on January the 29th. However, this was not our final destination yet. The annual meeting of the Hkahku Association along with the jubilee celebration was to be held at a village called, Pung-in-Yang, situated some 3-4 miles from the Sumprabum-Putao Road at a point 28 miles from Sumprabum. So, the next morning we drove up to that point and from there, each one would have to move under his own 'steam'.

At the village, the delegates from the various churches of the association were accomodated in temporary sheds covered with wild banana leaves and we were housed in a bamboo shed with raised floor, but was still roofed with banana leaves. The village is located on a little flat spot at the junction of two streams and high above the stream level. The meeting hall was also a temporary affair with more banana leaves and straw on the floor. The attendance was around 1300, men, women, and children. The regular business meetings were conducted on the Friday and Saturday; and Sunday was set aside for the jubilee celebration. The usual Kachin custom is to fire guns on such occasions, but since the day set for the jubilee celebration fell on Sunday, they requested permission to do the gun-firing on Saturday night instead. So, that Saturday night was noisy and it was a fitting beginning for the celebration.

At the various meetings on Sunday, the history of the work in this area was recounted by the first pioneers, Sara Kaw Yaw and Thra Sein Nyo. Stories about Sara Maran Robbin were also retold. The work was started in 1934 during the 'depression' years, and so not much financial help was received from the Foreign Mission Societies. But the Kachin Women's Society took on the responsibility and commissioned Sara Robbin for service in Sumprabum. He retired from the government education department and devoted the remainder of his life to the work in this area. That

was the beginning and now after 25 years they looked back with gratitude to God for the way He had led them to the Saviour. This association is a growing organisation and with such a hardy leader as Miss Lucy Bonney and with the prospect of taking on a full-time Association Secretary in the person of Sara Tong Si, the work will go far. There is still so much to be done, so many people to be reached and yet with so few to do it; but I am sure that by the end of the next twenty five years they will be a full-grown association working shoulder to shoulder with the other older associations in Burma. Here too, there was strong evidence that God is still at work.

On our return trip to Rangoon, we took in Bhamo, Sinlumkaba, Namkham, Kutkai, Lashio, Maymyo and Mandalay. At all these places we saw signs of activity. Myitkyina is completing the Geis' Memorial Church. At Bhamo, Roberts' High School is growing and has collected materials for the necessary Dining Hall-Kitchen building. The Karen Church is also nearing completion. At Sinlumkaba, 6000 feet up, work is going on from week to week on the Hanson Memorial Church. With their small means and with some help from the Mission, they are determined to see that this building is completed even if it takes them years to do it. At Namkham, the Shan Church had overgrown its old building and they have expended over K 10,000 on the present enlarged building, but they need help to put permanent walling to replace the temporary bamboo matting. Although there was no resident missionary there during the past year, the Kachin leaders at Kutkai had done very well. The Bible School had already closed for the year and the High School is one of the leading institutions there. Lashio, Maymyo and Mandalay tell the same story. In all, there is much to be thankful to God for these active and vigourous lives that form our churches.

I had been rather low in spirit before I made this trip, but seeing the wondrous works of God at first hand and in those settings, is encouraging and inspiring. May His name be praised.

A thousand leaders from many parts of Burma attend

# PASTORS AND CHRISTIAN WORKERS CONFERENCE

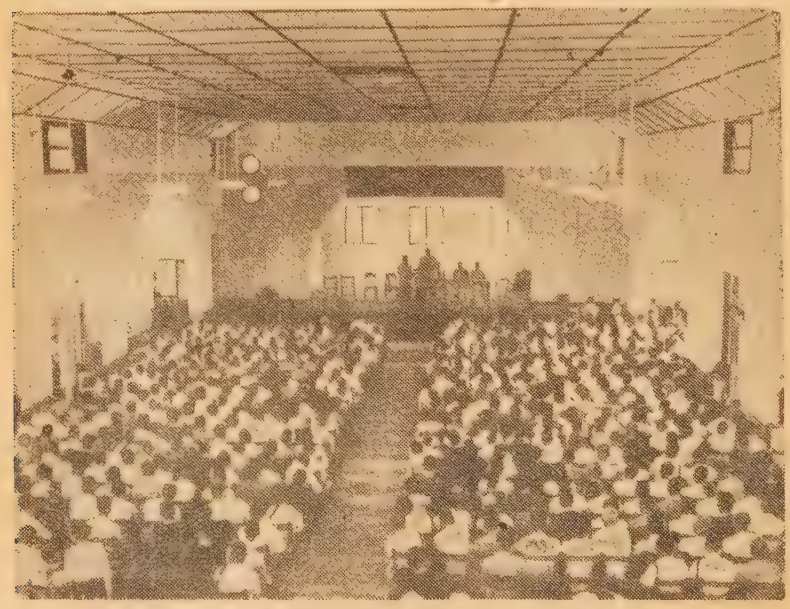
*by John Thet Gyi and F. G. Dickason*

THE Burma Christian Council, with the financial aid of the World Vision Team that covered travel and boarding expenses of all Christian workers attending the conference, held a Pastors' Conference at Seminary Hill, Insein, from July 14 to 17, 1959.

All the institutions on Seminary Hill were closed for the conference week in order to accommodate the guests. The meetings were held in the new Karen Centennial Chapel, which had not been formally dedicated but which was made available for the meeting.

The total number of Christian workers registered at the conference was 804, but the attendance was about 1000, with the Christians from the neighbouring churches. Reduced rates in rail and launch fares, obtained through the help of the government Ministry of Religious Affairs, and Ministry of Transport and Communication, enabled many delegates from Kachin State, Chin State, Arakan, Northern and South Eastern Shan States, and the Delta to attend the conference.

The World Vision Team was



**Kachin Christian Workers Singing at the Conference**

met at the Mingaladon air port by some members of the Burma Christian Council and by students of the Divinity School who gave the Team a rousing welcome with songs. The members of the Team included Dr. Halverson (leader), Dr. Paul Rees, Dr. Chaunchit Han, Dr. Sobripeens, Dr. Henry, Mr. Corner, Mr. Price, Mr. Calver, Dr. Barlin, and two medical men, Mr. Jackson and Mr. Ringer. The leader and the first four members mentioned above led the various meetings of the conference. Mr. Corner, one of the Team's musicians, was able to participate two days only because of a heart attack which sent him to the hospital and finally to the States.

On July 16th the army gave a tea party at Mingaladon Army Headquarters, supplying 40 buses for transport. Col. Hla Maung welcomed the members of the conference, and Col. Maung Maung encouraged the Christian workers to go on carrying out their splendid mission work with zeal. Brig. Aung Gyi, in his speech, promised the Christian workers freedom in their service to the Union and help from army, even after the army would no longer be the head of the government. The Christian workers were so pleased that they applauded heartily after these speeches. Dr. Halverson also spoke at length on how all the

nations of the world that were longing for peace would find peace only in Jesus Christ. John Thet Gyi had the privilege of thanking the army for all kinds of help rendered, and especially for Brig. Aung Gyi's speech.

On the 14th of July, Dr. U Ba Han presided at the ordination service of U John Thet Gyi. Those taking part in the ordination ceremony were Dr. Ba Han, Dr. Chit Maung, Dr, Hackett, Rev. Ba Hmyin, Rev. Peter Hla, and Rev. Mooler. Rev. Peter Hla offered the ordination prayer, and Dr. Paul Rees preached the ordination sermon. Others who took part in the service were Rev. S'ra S'Aye and Dr. Hla Bu.

On the 17th, there was a public evangelistic meeting in the Engineering College Hall, arranged by the Psychological Warfare Department and attended by over 1500 people. Dr. Halverson gave a moving message of Christ, the Saviour. About 100 responded joyfully to his invitation to commit themselves fully to Christ.

As an expression of their appreciation for the conference, a sum of K 6,195, brought by the Christian workers from their respective churches, was handed to the World Vision Team to carry on its work for the churches in Korea.

Rev: John Thet Gyi receives ordination

After six months in Burma

## *A NEW MISSIONARY DESCRIBES LIVING IN THE EAST*

*by Mary Ellen Williams*

A new land! A new people! A new challenge! In the early evening of New Year's Day, we anchored for the night in the muddy waters of the Rangoon River. As the sun slowly set in the West, its rays transformed the muddy expanse into a fantasy of pink, revealing a little of the oriental splendor that would greet us on the morrow.

About 10:00 A. M. on January 2, we disembarked from the Worcestershire. Many strange but smiling faces greeted us at the jetty. Out of this initial confusion of strange names and faces have grown many friendships. Although each of the missionaries and national workers have a different personality and a distinct task, they have one characteristic in common—a deep love for Christ and an abiding desire to testify and witness in His name.

First impressions of Rangoon proper is a strange mixture of East and West. The pedlar with his wares balanced precariously on his head; the night bazaar with scores of wooden stalls exhibiting a diversity of merchandise which vanishes before sunrise, the sidewalk restaurants; all vie with the more modern department store. Tiny raised bamboo huts provide a vivid contrast to the university engineering building with its unique coloring scheme or the radio building ultramodern in architectural design.

Driving is an unique if not a hazardous experience in Rangoon. Pedestrians, howling dogs, stray horses, tri-shaws, cumbersome oxcarts with wooden wheels, and pony carts are completely oblivious to that modern contrivance-the automobile. After having successfully navigated through the above and through an additional array of buses, taxis, army jeeps and trucks; remaining continuously on the left when instinct tells me I should be on the right, I am daily amazed when I arrive successfully and safely at my destination.

Customs in Burma seem strange and unusual at first. It is amazing, however, how readily the unfamiliar becomes the familiar; the unnatural the natural. Understanding the derivation of a custom removes the curtain that can so easily separate us from another person. When that curtain is removed differences in customs become inconsequential; only the underlying thought or emotion is of significance. Whether you remove your hat or your shoes when entering a church is rather immaterial—it is simply two different manifestations of the one basic desire to be reverent. The person who greets you on the street with such questions as: Where are you going? Have you eaten? How old are you? What is your occupation? is not being overly inquisitive or rude; he asks these questions out

of a genuine desire to be friendly or give assistance, which is so typically Burmese.

The temples of intricate design, the gold-gilted pagodas, the saffron clad monks elicit different emotions. Standing before the Shwedagon Pagoda with its tall spire rising 300 feet into the air and its overlay of gold glittering under the suns rays, I cannot help but be impressed by its magnificent beauty and splendor. The mythical chinthes, the diamond studded Buddhas, and the silver temples provide additional oriental charm. However, as I climbed the stairway leading to the pagoda and saw the crowded stalls on either side selling Buddhas, miniature temples, flowers and candles to be offered at the Shwedagon, I suddenly realized that there was nothing of eternal worth,—there was no personal God to provide Truth and Salvation and Life Eternal.

High tone or low tone! Aspirated or unaspirated! Language study is a composite of many diverse factors. There is the initial joy of hearing and recognizing your first Burmese sentence. There is the frustration of not being able to express yourself because of your limited vocabulary. There is the occasional thrill of understanding and being understood. There is the sympathetic understanding of your teacher when you make an embarassing blunder; the hilarity when you stress (yoo) I am about to take and it becomes (yoo) I am about to go insane. There are the interesting and sometimes revealing combinations of words and phrases. Finally, there is always the appreciation of the Burmese people when you attempt to speak their language.

Far surpassing these mere superficial impressions in importance are emotions of a less tangible nature. There is the warm friendship and fellowship of the national Christian. There is a sense of a oneness in Christ. I feel that this spirit was embodied in the July pastor's conference held at Insein. Seven hundred pastors and Christian workers, of different cultures, of different speech and of different dress gathered together from all over Burma with one purpose in mind to become more effectual witnesses for Christ.

Together we ask your prayers for Christ's work in Burma.

## VOLUNTEER YOUTH WORKERS PREPARE NGAPALI CAMP SITE

Led by Smo Ba Thoung Tin and Rev. M. A. Combs a group of Asho Chin youths helped to prepare a camp site on the Mission property on Ngapali beach near Sandoway during the hot season. They dug a well, put up a fence, prepared the foundation of a second building, and helped to bring building materials from Sandoway School compound. By next camp season an ideal camp site on the Ngapali beach will be ready to accommodate a hundred campers comfortably.

# *FRIENDS FROM FAR AWAY*

*From the Hasel's Box 105, Colo, Iowa,*

"Burma is daily in our prayers.....Sra Po Sin, with whom I traveled in the Moulmein area, should be returning from Thailand soon. His picture is on my desk. What an inspiration.....beginning as a missionary at 68 years of age.....God bless you all in your endeavours."

*From the R. G. Johnsons, 1024 Palmer Place, Waukegan, Illinois,*

"Greetings to all the friends in Burma. We reached San Francisco safely on June 28th and had a pleasant two week visit in Long Beach before coming east. Now we are in Waukegan, 35 miles north of Chicago. Our trip home was half hot (to Japan) and half cold (from Yokohama to U.S.A.). But we came into San Francisco on a lovely, sunny, Sunday morning. The church bells were ringing—what a joyous sound.

"We are quite nicely situated here, 10 blocks from my sister's home, and close to the First Baptist Church. The pastor, Claibourne Johnson, was in Burma early this year.....We are anxious to hear any news about our application for visa."

*From Esther Josif, 135 N. Main, Granville, Ohio,*

"Perhaps word has reached you of the death of Ida Davis. I would like to pay tribute to Ida, not only as a staunch, understanding friend but also as a staunch, unwavering missionary at heart. Even though she was allowed to spend only fourteen years as a foreign missionary, her interest in the people of Burma and in the progress of Christian work in Burma never waned or wavered. Some of the people whose lives she had touched between 1920 and 1934 were still writing to her at the time of her death, thanking her for her interest, her friendship, and her love. Surely her life is still bearing fruit for His Kingdom."

Miss Ida W. Davis, 75, had been failing in health several years, and was seriously ill only a few days, before her death May 1st. After her graduation from Biblical Seminary in New York, she went to Burma where she worked from 1920 to 1934 and was in charge of the ABM girls school in Prome.

*Mary L. Parish, 2824 N. 66th Ave., Omaha 4, Neb.*

"Jonas Baptist Home where I live, is being moved and will hereafter be known as the Baptist Home of Nebraska. I am well and reasonably happy; glad we have such comfortable homes in which to retire.

Dr. and Mrs. A. C. Rice are also members of our family. Not only are they the parents of Bill Rice, but also Dr. A. C. Rice was formerly a missionary in Burma—a Professor in Judson College. He enjoys the Burma letters I share with him as well as I do, and I read their Burma letters. Dr. Rice is 87 years of age, is able to attend church again after undergoing a severe operation.

I pray for Burma, and for the ones, old and new, who are carrying on the work in our beloved land of adoption."

# News Briefs

U Ba Hymin and Sra S'Aye were Burma delegates to the East Asia Christian Conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaya.

Mrs. Louise Paw was elected to the Continuation Committee of the East Asia Christian Conference, and the Secretaryship of the Committee on Cooperation between Men and Women.

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Saw Judson Aung, who received seminary training in Berkeley Divinity School several years ago, was ordained in March in greater Rangoon at Kanbe Baptist Church, where he is pastor.

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## UNIVERSITY STUDENT AID

Maran Zau Yaw has been appointed Director of the Judson Student Aid Programme. Due to the increasing number of applicants for aid and the limited funds available, the Student Aid Committee has had to cut down the size of loan it can give to each student, and the scholarships to the two best boys and two best girls passing the Matriculation Examination from Baptist Schools.

## NEW BUILDINGS AT DIVINITY SCHOOL

The Burma Divinity School has recently dedicated two new buildings. With the help of the Nanking Seminary Foundation, the school has a new library wing. The school also has a new wing for dining hall and men's dormitory. These additions will relieve the very crowded living conditions of the students, and provide for the first time in the history of the school proper and adequate library facilities.

Nearby a spacious, adequate dormitory for women students and staff members has just been completed and dedicated in August. The new buildings indicate the growth and expansion of the Divinity School in recent years as it seeks to give higher education to Christian pastors who come from all parts of Burma for training.

# *COMING*

## *RETURNING MISSIONARIES*

Rev. and Mrs. David Stimson and three children (Wade, Scott, and Wendy), after furlough in the States will arrive in Rangoon on the M. V. Staffordshire October 13. The Stimsons, working with the Burma Baptist Churches Union, will be living in Maymyo.

Miss Elizabeth Taylor will sail September 30th on S. S. Queen Mary from New York and arrive in Rangoon via M. V. Leicestershire November 8th. Miss Taylor will be working primarily in the school at Bhamo. She was stationed at Nampaka before she left Burma in 1952.

Miss Alice Mae Simmons, together with Elizabeth Taylor will leave USA September 30th and will come by England on the S. S. Queen Mary and arrive in Rangoon on the MV Leicestershire November 8th. Returning from a year's furlough, she will resume her work as Religious Education Professor at the Burma Divinity School on Seminary Hill at Insein.

## *VISITORS*

Dr. and Mrs. E. B. Willingham, General Secretary of the American Baptist Foreign Missionary Societies, will be visiting in Burma from September 1st until September 23rd. They will be travelling and visiting the Christian work, making trips to Myaungmya, Bassein, Moulmein, besides Rangoon.

Mrs. Wade McKinney, outstanding woman leader in both the American Baptist Convention and the National Baptist Convention in U.S.A. will visit Burma in November. Besides making a real contribution to Christian work through organization and program for women's groups, she gives inspirational addresses and has a very pleasing singing voice. Her husband and children are also outstanding in their positions and services they are rendering. Her visit here will be both inspiring and helpful to Christians of Burma.

Dr. Pierce Beaver, Professor at Chicago Divinity School, University of Chicago, will be in Burma soon. He will preach the Convention Sermon at the Annual Meeting in Tavoy, in October.

Miss Hazel Shank American Baptist Foreign Secretary for Burma, Assam, and Thailand is due for a visit to Burma in December.

# *ARRIVALS FROM U.S.A.*

Mary I. Laughlin arrived via air June 23rd from a year's furlough in America. She has returned to her school work in Myitkyina.

Rev. and Mrs. Edwin T. Fletcher returned to Burma July 18th by PAA after a year's furlough in the States. They will resume their work with the Pwo Karen people.

Rev. and Mrs. Leonard A. Crain arrived at Mingaladon Airport Sunday July 19th, after a year's furlough in U.S.A. The Crains are living in Mandalay where they work in the Burma Christian Council visual aid center.

Saw Clifford Kyaw Dwe and David Von Bik arrived in Rangoon safely by ship after their studies in U.S.A. David studied two years at Berkeley Baptist Divinity School and received an M.A. degree. He will return to his home area, the Chin Hills, and become Principal of the Zomi Bible School. Saw Clifford studied 1 year at Eastern Seminary at Philadelphia and one year at Andower Newton Seminary near Boston, where he received Master of Religious Education degree. He will continue in his former position as youth work director with the Karen Baptist Convention.

Miss Mary Fletcher, daughter of Ed and Virginia, visited her parents and friends in Burma during August and September. This was Mary's first trip back to Burma since her early childhood. Mary is a missionary nurse in Africa, serving with the C. B. F. M. S.

Mr. and Mrs. F. J. Fox and three children were September guests in Rangoon. Mrs. Fox is the former Barbara Smith, daughter of Mr. D. O. Smith, who was Professor of Physics at Judson College and Treasurer of the ABM after world War II. Barbara, having left Burma at the age of 12, enjoyed renewing old acquaintances. Mr. Fox works for ICA in Delhi, India where he has been for two years and will be returning for two more years of service.

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## *BURMA BAPTIST CONVENTION ANNUAL MEETING*

The Burma Baptist Convention will convene for its Annual Meeting at Tavoy in the Tenassirum Division October 16th to 18th, 1959. Although travel conditions by bus and train are somewhat unsettled, delegates are planning to attend the meetings. The theme for the Convention is "Christ's Call to World Mission" found in the text, Matthew 28:19—20.

## AMERICAN BAPTIST MISSIONARIES IN BURMA

INSEIN, Seminary Hill
Miss Marion Beebe
Dr. and Mrs. Paul Clasper
Miss Dorothy Rich

KENGTUNG, Shan States
Kengtung Christian Hospital
Dr. and Mrs. Keith Dahlberg
Miss M. B. (Peggy) Smith

KUTKAI, A.B.B. Mission
Northern Shan States,
Rev. and Mrs. D. M. Crider

MANDALAY, 82nd Street
Rev. and Mrs. L. A. Crain

MAYMYO, A.B.B. Mission
Miss Ecco Hunt
Rev. and Mrs. David Stimson

MOULMEIN, Christian Hospital
Dr. Dorothy Gates
Dr. Bina Sawyer

MOULMEIN
Rev. and Mrs. C. R. Erickson
No. 12 Mission Road
Miss M. E. Shivers
No. 11 Mission Road

MYITKYINA, A.B.B. Mission
Rev. and Mrs. H. G. Tegenfeldt
Miss Mary I. Laughlin

PANGWAI, via Loimwe P. O.
Eastern Shan States
Rev. and Mrs. P. W. Lewis

RANGOON, 143 St. John's Road
Miss Rebecca Anderson
Rev. and Mrs. R. W. Beaver
Rev. and Mrs. R. E. Brown
Rev. and Mrs. Milton Combs
Dr. and Mrs. F. G. Dickason
Rev. and Mrs. E. T. Fletcher
Rev. and Mrs. Lloyd James
Rev. and Mrs. Harold Schock
Miss Lucy F. Wiatt
Miss Mary Ellen Williams

SUMPRABUM, Kachin State
Miss Lucy Bonney

TAVOY, A.B.B. Mission
Rev. Walter Sutton

TOUNGOO, A.B.B. Mission
Miss Charity Carman

YEDWINYEGAN, Myaungmya
Miss Emilie Ballard

ON LEAVE IN THE U.S.A.
Dr. and Mrs. W. D. Hackett
Rev. and Mrs. R. G. Johnson
Miss Ruth Keyser
Miss Alice Mae Simmons